

# The Otago Climber

October 2018



*"There must be a student here somewhere!"* – 2018 Section Snowcraft Course instructor Heather Rhodes demonstrates her avalanche search technique. Story page 4. Photo: Alex Shaw

# ***The Otago Climber***

*The monthly newsletter of the  
Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club*

**October 2018**

## **Club Night**

**Wednesday, 3 October 2018**

**University of Otago Staff Club, 7.30pm**

### ***Real Risk: a story of the potential consequences of mountaineering.***

Committee member Heather Rhodes has the unusual experience of having had an abseil anchor fail while mountaineering and having lived to tell the tale. Indeed, it was a moment

of pride for her to find her name mentioned by a past NZAC president in the same sentence as Steve Venables' - they being two of the four people he could think of, worldwide, who'd survived abseil anchor failure.



It's now almost 5 years since Heather tumbled 300 vertical metres down a couloir, subsequently spending 8 days in a coma, 2 1/2 months in hospital and 17 months off work. Come and hear the story about her accident, of five years of recovery and of slowly getting back into the hills, interspersed with a few of her thoughts on how this has affected her approach to risk.

She promises a good number of beautiful mountain photos, a good few hospital photos, and a large chunk of photos taken indoors and in the city - since indoors in the city is where one has to hang out when things have gone really wrong in the mountains. It's a story of gratefulness to all who've been involved in her recovery so far, and of gratitude for bodies that heal. .

## Trips and events calendar . . . .

### **Tuesday night Rock Climbing begins 2 October**

Summer is almost here; time to get the rock shoes out ready for this season's Tuesday Night Climbing. For more details, and new Mapoutahi topos, see story on page 9.

### **Mt Dick, 6 – 7 October**

Danilo is leading trip to climb Mt Dick in the Eyre Mountains. This should be ideal for those who have just completed this year's Snowcraft Course. For more information, or to book your place on this trip, email Danilo on [danilo.hegg@hotmail.com](mailto:danilo.hegg@hotmail.com)

### **Learn to rock climb, 3 November**

The Section has organised Tim Bartholomew to run an introductory course for those who have never climbed before – but would like to join in the Tuesday night sessions. Full details will be on the Otago Section's Facebook page soon.

### **Jane Peak, 3-4 November**

Phil Somerville will be taking a trip to Jane Peak, the highest point in the Eyre Mountains. Phil's e-mail address is [psomer39@gmail.com](mailto:psomer39@gmail.com) if you'd like more info or to book a place.

### **Central Rock-climbing, 10-11 November.**

Eve O'Brien will be leading the first rock trip of the season to the crags of Central Otago. An Alexandra local, she's planning to visit some of the crags only locals use round Alexandra and Cromwell. If you are keen to book a place, or would like more information, contact Eve on 0276423211 or at [eve.j.obrien@gmail.com](mailto:eve.j.obrien@gmail.com)

### **Trip Leaders Night, Monday, 12 November**

The Section is very keen to attract more trip leaders and Ryan Thomas has organised a get together for those interested in leading club trips. More details on page 6

### **Lydia Bradey, Section Club Night, Wednesday, 14 November.**

Our November Section meeting will be one week later than usual, to allow Lydia to recover from her current trip to China. World leading climber, high alpine guide, physiotherapist and Alpinist magazine's international jury member for this year's Grit and Rock First Ascent Awards; Lydia will talk of her recent adventures.

### **Newsletter survey on now**

We'd love to know if you read this newsletter and what suggestions you might have to make it better. Please click the link and complete the short survey – we'd love to hear what you think.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFsSF7CYbDNH32FijWr7IBOACK8syaCEBlyyDp4OLNmFz99Q/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFsSF7CYbDNH32FijWr7IBOACK8syaCEBlyyDp4OLNmFz99Q/viewform?usp=sf_link)

## Another successful Snowcraft

*Erica Clapp reports on the 2018 Section Snowcraft Course with photos by Alex Shaw*

A few weeks ago, I was finally able to tick off a big item on my mountain to-do list: take an intro mountaineering course. After getting fairly comfortable in tramping terrain, I was hoping to take my skills to the next level to learn how to travel safely through snowy landscapes with my crampons and ice axe.

Along with 11 other students and 4 instructors, we headed up to the Remarkables on Saturday morning. The first lesson was to learn how to walk. It sounds simple but the instructors emphasized that your own two feet and your boots can get you pretty far alone if you're able to use the edge of your boots and dig in. Once we mastered walking, we put on our crampons and learned different techniques to go up and down the hills. We were taught the importance of maintaining two points of contact at all times to reduce the probability of slipping.



Despite the soft dense snow on a warm afternoon, we pushed on to learn all about self-arresting. We learned that while self-arresting practice is incredibly fun and makes you feel like a kid, it's very terrifying and hectic in a real-life situation so it's best to do everything possible to avoid having to self-arrest at all. After a bit of avalanche awareness and transceiver practice, we called it a day.

I was a bit bummed we weren't able to camp overnight but the next morning, I was grateful because the winds were incredibly strong. The goal for the day was to summit something if the conditions



allowed. Despite the strong winds, we managed to put our newly learned techniques into practice as we made our way up Telecom Tower. A quick descent filled with post-holing and shovel sliding had us back at the base with plenty of time for a hot coffee and pastry.

I'm so happy I got to partake in the course. For me, the biggest takeaway was just the reassurance that with a bit of knowledge and practice, I could be fully capable in beginning terrain. I know the Southern Alps are no joke and it feels great having a bit of formal knowledge and skill behind me and it has given me some new energy to tackle some new mountains.

# We Want You – to lead trips for the Otago Section

*Ryan Thomas, Otago Section committee member*

**As members of the club are no-doubt aware, one of the primary activities of the Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club is to organize trips for its members. These trips are a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to the area (or country!), go to cool places, and learn new skills.**

What members may not be aware of, or may not have internalized, is that club trips are organized and led entirely by volunteers. These are members who have decided that they want to contribute to the section by planning and executing a trip to the mountains that is open to all members, and, as I'm sure we are all aware, that kind of planning takes time and effort that they could have put into a trip just with their close friends. With only a couple of exceptions, these trips are generally well-attended and well-received, indicating that many members, like me, appreciate the effort of these volunteer trip leaders and wish that there were more club events throughout the year.

Unfortunately there is a limit to the number of club trips that can be organized throughout the year, and this limit is due to a lack of trip leaders. To give some perspective: in the last 24 months, eight section members organized a total of 26 trips (excluding Snowcraft courses, which are also volunteer-driven). Of those trips, half of them (13) were organized by either Keith Moffat (club treasurer) or Danilo Hegg (former chairman and current trip coordinator). A further 7 trips were organized by either Lindsay or Riley Smith (club secretary and chairman, respectively). Of the eight members who have organized club events in the last two years, six of those (75%) have been on the committee. Clearly, the section has a committee problem when it comes to organizing events, in that it is mostly committee members who are doing the organizing!

Given our limited pool of volunteer trip leaders, the number of club trips is not likely to increase beyond its current rate of about 1 trip per month. That, dear reader, is where you come in: we want you to become a volunteer trip leader. It's the best way to contribute to the club, better even than becoming a stuffy committee member. Do you think that there aren't enough ski touring trips? Organize some! Think that the club's rock climbers need to experience



## WE WANT YOU!

something other than sandy local crags? Take a rock climbing trip to Babylon! Think that members don't suffer enough? Bushbash up any NZ peak!

Interested? Then let's answer the two big questions you probably have:

**How do I become a trip leader?** In order to protect the safety of section members and, to be honest, the club's reputation, the section committee vets any potential trip leader. While members who are on a trip should be capable of making their own decisions regarding safety, it is all-too-possible that a member might organize a trip beyond their abilities to handle, in regards to either their own inexperience or the inexperience of trip participants. We don't want some neophyte climber organizing a club trip to climb Mount Aspiring, for instance, and having that climber manage a bunch of other neophyte climbers: it's a recipe for disaster. To safeguard against that possibility, trip leaders should be known to the committee.

What does take to "become known"? In the past the committee hasn't had a particularly clear policy on what we are looking for in a trip leader which may be why we have so few. Going forward, we have a clearer policy for new trip leaders:

1. New leaders must have attended at least two club trips. Ideally, if you are looking to lead particular kinds of trips, at least one of the trips that you attended should be a similar type. So if you're looking to lead ski touring trips, you should try and get on a ski touring or mountaineering trip first.

2. Contact the committee or section trip coordinator (Danilo Hegg)



directly and let him know that you are interested in leading trips for the club and some of the club trips that you have been on. He or another committee member will get in touch with the organizers of the events that you have been on and see if they will vouch for you as someone who could capably lead a club trip.

3. Familiarize yourself with the NZAC trip leader guidelines, which can be found at [www.alpineclub.org.nz/resources/organising-trips/](http://www.alpineclub.org.nz/resources/organising-trips/), and/or come to a Trip Leader's Night. We are planning to host one of these on Monday, November 12 as a way to provide information to current/new/prospective trip leaders and answer any questions that they might have

4. Plan a trip! Your first couple of trips will likely need to be approved by the trip coordinator or other committee member, but as you need to go through the committee to promote the trip this is unlikely to add any delay to when your trip can take place.

**How do I organize a trip?** Organizing a club trip should be no harder than organizing a well-planned trip with your friends. You first need to decide on what you are going to do. Rock climbing? Mountaineering? Tramping? Skiing? Next, you should decide where you are going/what the objective is. Generally speaking, club trips should be

relatively low risk. For instance, mountaineering objectives should be alpine grade 2 or lower. Trips planned for harder/riskier objectives are unlikely to meet with approval from the trip coordinator or the committee. Ski touring/tramping/rock climbing trips are subject to a similar risk assessment.

Once you've decided on the location/objective and when you want to hold the trip, you should consider the details. Some things to consider are:

- How to get there? Carpool and/or meet at the parking lot?
- Who is this trip aimed at? Are you looking to take beginners on an easy trip, or are you looking for more experienced people?
- What should people expect in terms of hazards, technical difficulty, and physical requirements?
- What kind of gear will people need?
- What's your contingency plan for poor weather/conditions? When do you make the call to change plans or cancel the trip?
- How much will it cost and when do people need to pay? Will it just be the cost of petrol, or do you need to book a hut or even extra transport, like a helicopter or jet boat?

Once you have these details, you should contact the trip coordinator with the information and a short description of the trip that can be put on the newsletter and national webpage. You will also need to provide a contact method so that members can get in touch with you.



The committee can also provide you with a Google form template (or you can get one from [www.alpineclub.org.nz/resources/organising-trips/](http://www.alpineclub.org.nz/resources/organising-trips/)) that you can send to applicants to get their details; you should modify this as necessary.

Some questions that you might want to ask are:

- Who is your emergency contact, and how can we contact them?
- What kind of experience do you have?
- Are you going to carpool or will you meet at the event location?
- (For shared meals) Do you have specific dietary requirements?
- Do you have any medical conditions that might impact your ability to participate?

Keep in mind that you don't have to take everyone who expresses interest. If they don't seem like they will have the necessary experience or ability to complete the trip safely, you should not take them with you.

When you leave for a trip, you should have a list of members who are participating in that event, and you should make sure that they are all there before setting off on your adventure. You should also make sure to leave your intentions with a trusted party, and make sure to notify them when you get back.

Finally, it is club policy that all club trips have so-called "field communications" so that you can call for help if necessary. If you are only going to be places with mobile reception, then a mobile phone is likely sufficient. Otherwise, you will need a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or equivalent.

The section has some available for club events if you don't have your own.

Further questions? If you have further questions, we would love to hear from you! Come talk to committee members at the next section meeting, email us, or come to the upcoming Trip Leader's Night!

## TRIP LEADER'S NIGHT

The Section is planning an introductory session during November where we will talk aspiring leaders through the requirements and the support and training the Section offers. We are planning to meet on Monday, 12 November at the upstairs bar of the Duke of Wellington at 7.30pm – for about an hour – where we will shout your first refreshment for the evening.

To book a place - or for more information, email your contact details to [otago.climber@gmail.com](mailto:otago.climber@gmail.com)

It will be great to see you along.

Finally, note that some details about organizing trips might change in the near future, as the committee is looking at trialling a trip organization tool to help trip leaders plan, organize, and disseminate information about trips. We will keep you posted!

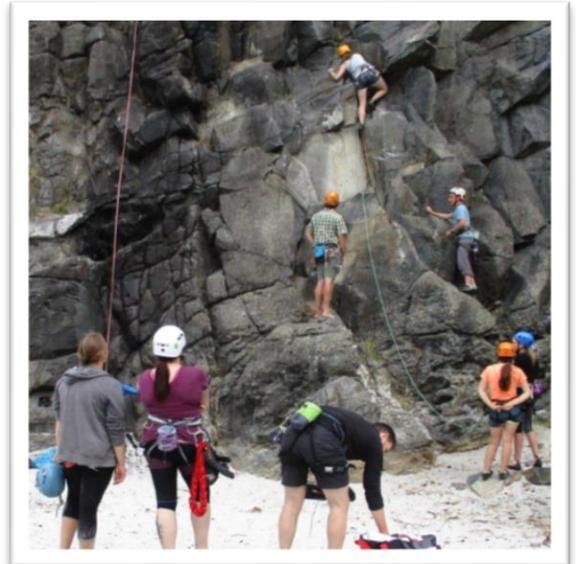


*Last year's trip over Gunsight Pass – you could be our next trip leader.*

## Tuesday climbing about to start

The ever-popular Tuesday Night Rock Climbing will begin again for this summer on Tuesday, 2 October, with climbers meeting at the usual place alongside Logan Park at 5.15pm – aiming for a prompt departure at 5.30 to make the most of the daylight hours.

Once again, this year we are investigating a range of Section courses to encourage new climbers to develop skills and safe climbing practices. The first of these will be on 3 November, so that first-time climbers to Tuesday evenings will have had a chance to learn the basics before they come out. We also plan to offer courses for the more experienced intermediate climbers; especially those keen to learn trad. climbing skills. These courses will be advertised in the Newsletter and on Facebook



Without getting too much red tape wrapped round our climbing, we are going to continue with the check-in system we started last year, so we do have basic contact details for those climbing each week, particularly where climbers are not members or are not known to us. As well as giving us basic safety information, it will allow us to better understand who is coming each week and what they want from the section. For weekly updates, keep watching NZAC – Otago Section on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/osonzac](http://www.facebook.com/osonzac)

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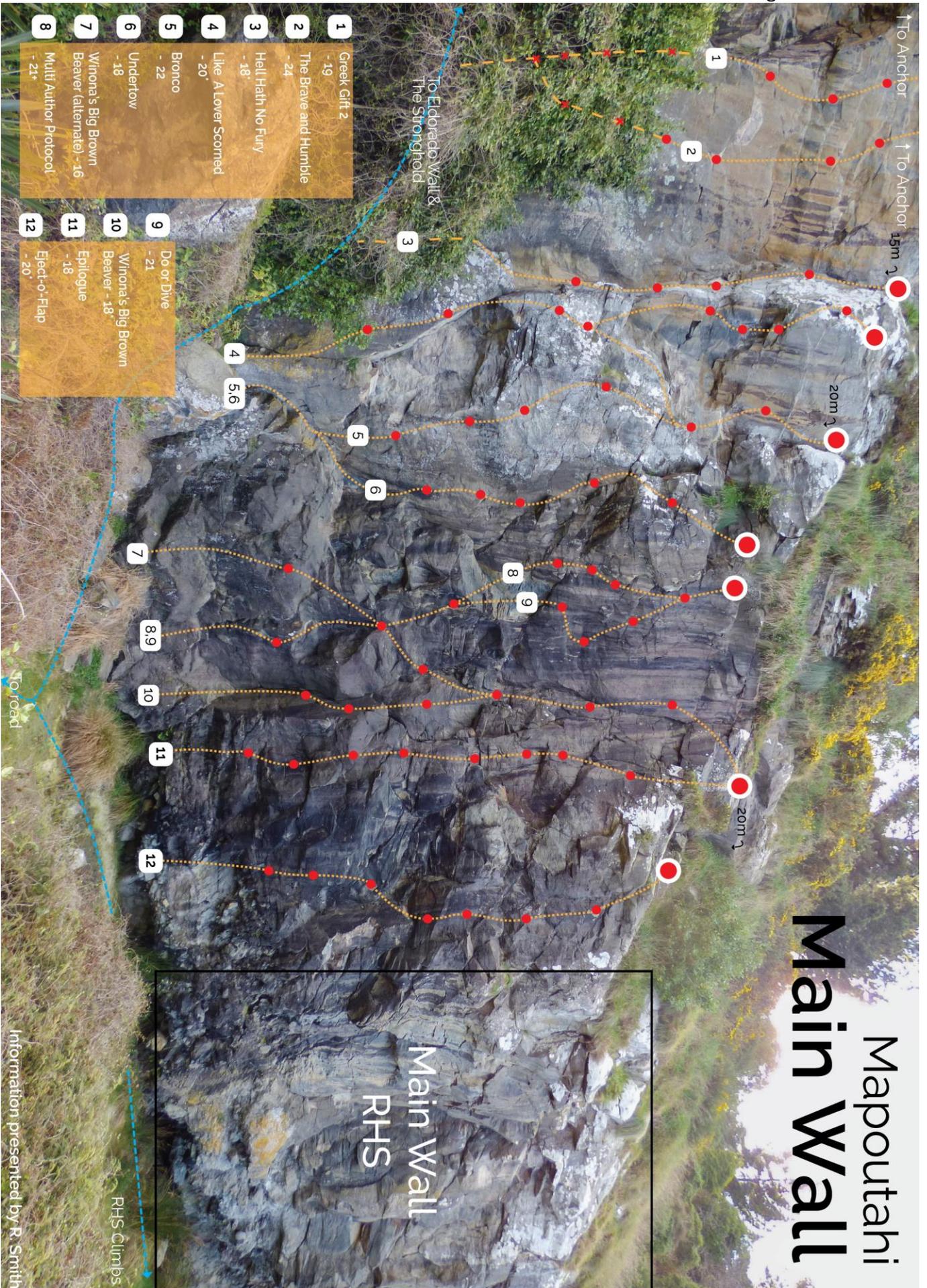
## Riley updates topos for Mapoutahi

Last summer I was climbing at Mapoutahi and realized how many climbs there were around that I have never heard of before. I was hesitant to start climbs not knowing the grade and length of them, so left them for next time; which I feel is a common thing to do among climbers in Dunedin. I do art design at school, so as a small (or so I thought at the time) side project, I decided to do something about it that would do justice to the hours of work that a handful of local climbers have put into cleaning and bolting our local sport climbing crag, Mapoutahi.

The new topos will be all out on ClimbNZ soon, (just search 'Mapoutahi rock climbing' on google), and I am working on having links to high res topos for printing off. They are a very rushed side project to my year 13 portfolio - but I hope they help you climbers try new stuff instead of sticking to the main wall! And of course, if you spot any errors, feel free to email me and I can fix them. Lastly, I would like to thank Steve Carr for helping me extensively with proofreading the topos so that they are up to date - sorry for spamming you with many photos of rocks!

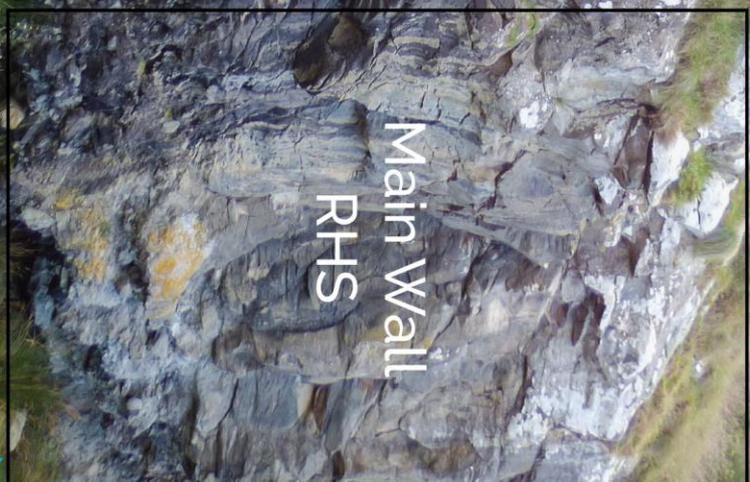


# Mapoutahi Main Wall



- 1 Greek Gift 2 - 19
- 2 The Brave and Humble - 24
- 3 Hell Hath No Fury - 18
- 4 Like A Lover Scorned - 20
- 5 Bronco - 22
- 6 Underflow - 18
- 7 Wirona's Big Brown Beaver (alternate) - 16
- 8 Multi Author Protocol - 21+

- 9 Do or Dive - 21
- 10 Wirona's Big Brown Beaver - 18
- 11 Epilogue - 18
- 12 Eject-o-Flap - 20



Information presented by R. Smith

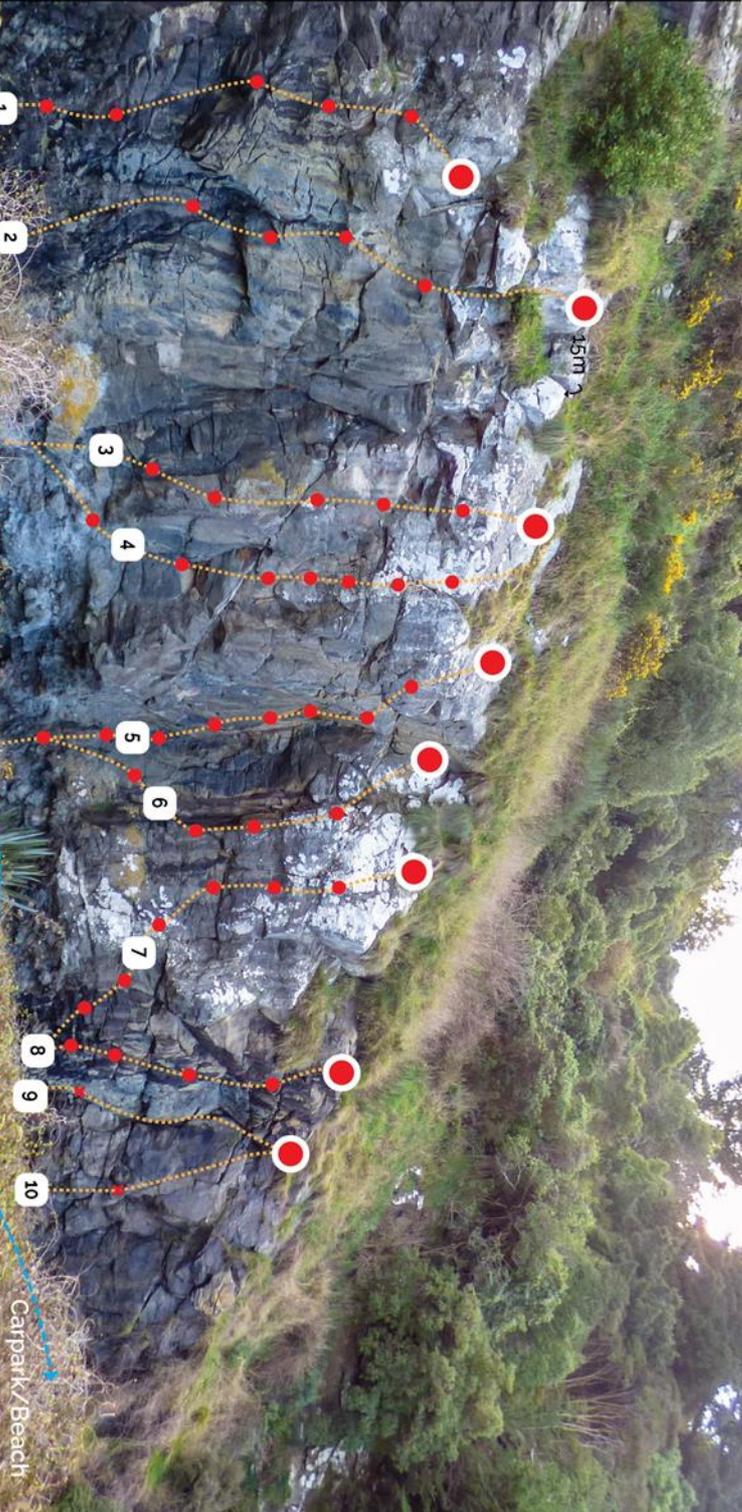
RHS Climbs



# Main Wall RHS



Main Wall  
Central



Main Wall Central

- 1 Atokehe -19
- 2 Dirty Sanchez -22
- 3 Biscuit Belly -21

- 4 Hanging on a Mystery -21
- 5 Electro-flage -23
- 6 Chocolate Fondue -21

- 7 DASH -23
- 8 Chossy Little Pumpfest -19
- 9 Big Bad Trad -7

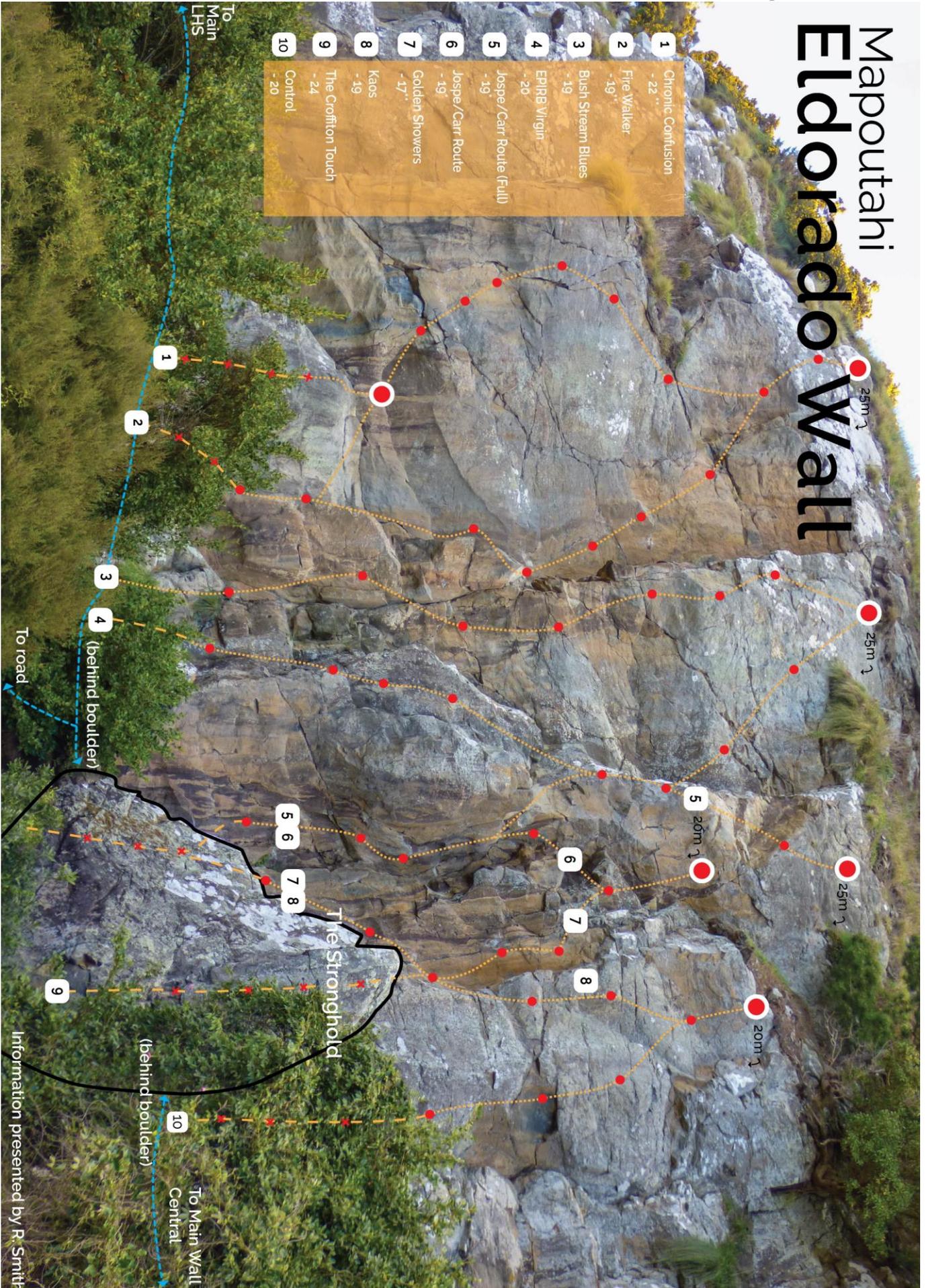
- 10 Big Bad Trad Direct -14

Carpark/Beach



# Mapoutahi Eldorado Wall

- 1 Chronic Confusion - 22
- 2 Fire Walker - 19
- 3 Bush Stream Blues - 19
- 4 EPIRB Virgin - 20
- 5 Josppe/Carr Route (Full) - 19
- 6 Josppe/Carr Route - 19
- 7 Golden Showers - 17
- 8 Kaos - 19
- 9 The Croffton Touch - 24
- 10 Control - 20



Information presented by R. Smith

### Process for PLB hire . . . .

The Otago Section has two PLBs for Section members to use when heading outdoors. Rental is free for NZAC members but \$5 per day for non-members. So that we can track the rentals, and respond if something goes wrong, the Section has created an online booking form at <https://goo.gl/forms/TQJrhMZxacHf30qP2>

When the form is completed online the results are automatically loaded into a spreadsheet in the Section's Google Drive, so we have a record of your rental and planned trip details. All that you do then is to arrange to collect a unit from either Keith Moffat [Moffat.k172@gmail.com](mailto:Moffat.k172@gmail.com) or Riley Smith [rileychallis@gmail.com](mailto:rileychallis@gmail.com) . Further contact details in the newsletter.

### Nominations are open for the NZAC Volunteer of the Year 2018

NZAC Volunteer of the Year (VOTY) is awarded at each AGM. Individuals and Sections nominate an NZAC volunteer that they think have done great work over the course of the previous year. Please complete the online nomination form no later than Monday 1st October 2018: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/the-nzac/heritage/volunteer-of-the-year-award/>

## Section Safety Gear Rental

Our eight sets of avalanche equipment and eight sets of snowshoes are now available for rent from the new Hunting and Fishing shop, now at 141 Crawford Street, in Dunedin. The new shop is open seven days till 5.30 weekdays, 5pm Saturday and 4pm Sunday. More details at [www.huntingandfishing.co.nz](http://www.huntingandfishing.co.nz) .

The rental costs are \$5 per day for an avalanche set of transceiver, probe and shovel and \$5 per day for snowshoes for all Alpine Club members. You MUST show your current membership card to receive that rate. Not a member, or don't have your card? Then the fee is \$10 per day and you will be required to pay a \$20 deposit.



Members are welcome to collect gear on Friday and return Monday and two day's rental will apply. If you wish to make other arrangements, please contact Keith or any of the committee and we will sort things out BEFORE you go into the shop. If you have any issues with the gear or rentals, please don't hassle the staff at Hunting and Fishing as they are doing us a huge favour by running the rental scheme for us



<b>2018-19 Otago Section Committee</b>			
Chair	Riley Smith	027 222 8731	<a href="mailto:rileychallis@gmail.com">rileychallis@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer, Equipment	Keith Moffat	027 6644037	<a href="mailto:Moffat.k172@gmail.com">Moffat.k172@gmail.com</a>
Secretary, Newsletter	Lindsay Smith	027 404 8911	<a href="mailto:lindsay@plumtree.net.nz">lindsay@plumtree.net.nz</a>
Trips, Banff Film Festival &CCM Rep.	Danilo Hegg		<a href="mailto:danilo_hegg@hotmail.com">danilo_hegg@hotmail.com</a>
Instruction	Heather Rhodes	027 258 6534	<a href="mailto:heathermayrhodes@gmail.com">heathermayrhodes@gmail.com</a>
Rock climbing	Eve O'Brien	0276423211	<a href="mailto:eve.jobrien@gmail.com">eve.jobrien@gmail.com</a>
Development	Ryan Thomas	0273115723	<a href="mailto:Ryan.j.thomas1@gmail.com">Ryan.j.thomas1@gmail.com</a>

**Section Contact information**

*Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club*  
c/o 172 Gladstone Rd, Dalmore, Dunedin 9016

Email: [otago.climber@gmail.com](mailto:otago.climber@gmail.com)

Web: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/region/otago/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/osonzac>